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ABSTRACT

A process-model for writing in a second language is presented. Its seven components include the following: prewriting, draft 1 (not graded), feedback on draft 1, draft 2 (not graded), feedback on draft 2, final draft, and postwriting. Student and instructor attitudes toward the process are discussed, along with an analysis of the different types of feedback at each stage of the writing process. Suggestions are offered for peer and instructor commentary in and out of class, including both written and oral observations. Sample feedback review forms are provided for beginning and intermediate/advanced Spanish classes. It is concluded that the use of student feedback (through guides and tutorials) and instructor feedback (through conferences and written comments) all enhance student writing. They allow students to practice analytical and editing skills, require students to revise their work, and encourage multi-skill second language interaction revolving around the writing task. Above all, peer feedback steers students away from the notion that they are writing for the teacher alone. (Contains 18 references.) (LB)

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Using the Process-Model for Writing: Options for Responding to Student Drafts

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Introduction

Process writing by definition implies on-going collaboration on student writing by students and instructor. The full process of writing proceeds through distinct stages and multiple drafts: idea generation, drafting, organizing, expanding ideas, exploring style, proofreading and collaboration with other writers. Of course, there is no one correct sequence. Students repeat most of these steps as a writing assignment progresses. (In this paper, a writing assignment refers to any student writing such a paragraph, letter or an essay at any skill level.) A typical process-model scenario for writing in the a second-language (L_2 which in this essay refers to the Spanish language) classroom is:

1. Prewriting

   Goal: To generate ideas, learn about topic, collect information

   Methods: Brainstorm, freewrite, discussion, readings, etc.

2. Draft 1 (not graded)

   Goal: Produce a loosely structured composition with a central idea (thesis)

   Methods: Write down everything student knows about the topic, early attempt to organize ideas

3. Feedback on Draft 1

   Goal: narrow topic, clarify thesis, weed out irrelevant ideas, suggest organizational pattern, point out all incomprehensible parts, suggest further ideas or examples

Methods: Peer tutorials (see Appendix A), commenting guides, instructor conferences

4. Draft 2 (not graded)

   Goal: Produce revised, more focused composition improving content and organization

   Methods: Engaging feedback from Draft 1, rewriting and restructuring essay

5. Feedback on Draft 2

   Goal: Thorough examination of grammar, content, organization and style considerations by peer writers and instructor

6. Final Draft

   Goal: To write a polished copy (final copy graded along with an assessment of supporting documents--i.e., editing guides and drafts--to verify the process)

   Methods: Student rewrites and edits paper regarding feedback from others and self-review

7. Postwriting

   Goal: To share writing (to instill sense of audience)

   Methods: Postwriting activities engaging peer writing, i.e., read polished writing assignments in class, exchange papers with another class

Student and Instructor Attitudes toward the Process

If writing is truly a process then students do not simply produce a piece for the instructor to grade. Students must realize that rewriting is not a punishment for getting it wrong the first time. Ideally in the L_2 class, students write more than you can read or grade. Discovery writing (Spanos 441) and writing for self-awareness (Steers 421) are implicit in this process. Often journals

are used to encourage less-formal writing which is not necessarily graded. Students must know that all writers revise and rewrite. This idea may not come easily, given the nature of writing exercises most L_2 students had been asked to perform in previous second-language courses. Typically students wrote one-shot writing exercises for the instructor, for example pattern-centered drills or controlled composition through the teaching of grammar or rhetorical patterns. Far from the communicative activities that we now believe best equip students to communicate in the target language, instructors and students alike realized that this type of writing assignment was usually devoid of content. These earlier methods have given way to process-centered approaches that focus on the writer's cognitive processes, by helping students find the link between their background knowledge and experience and the academic requirement of writing in Spanish. This challenge requires different behavior on the part of the instructor. First of all, instructors must define for themselves and their students the difference between the instructor's role as coach and their other role as evaluator. **Do not try to coach and evaluate at the same time**. The instructor coaches throughout the drafting process and reads only the final version to evaluate (Maimon).

Considerations: Reading, Writing and Contrastive Rhetoric

Different types of feedback are appropriate at each stage in the writing process. Early in the writing process, students must learn to (1) read for clarity, (2) analyze for content and organization and (3) make suggestions for revision. In the later stages of feedback, instructors offer strategies for editing, proofing, and commenting on style. Feedback from multiple sources not only aids the recipient, but along the way students become better second-language readers.

They then transfer this ability to better revise their own Spanish writing with their enhanced analytical and editing skills. The close relationship between reading and writing has just begun to be explored in L_2 research. A recent preliminary study suggests that literacy skills can transfer across languages and that reading ability transfers more easily from L_1 to L_2 than does writing ability (Carson 245). Reading and analyzing peer writing improves the quality of the revised writing assignments in four ways: (1) by helping the students go beyond their own personal knowledge base, (2) by exposing students to other student works to see how their peers make the topic culturally and linguistically accessible, (3) by displaying other strategies for expression in the second language and (4) by demonstrating specialized vocabularies. This occurs when peer writing is at its best; but, even when peer writing is flawed, student exchange of writing will cultivate at least some of the above attributes therefore validating peer collaboration. Of course, I assume that students will be exposed to authentic writing samples elsewhere in the course. Students learn quickly to distinguish between authentic Spanish writing and peer writing--the former being generally harder to decode! I suggest that having peers read each other's writing encourages good reading habits, since students who read each other's essays have some knowledge of the content of the essay from conversation and prewriting activities. Because of this, students are not as likely to read and translate word for word each other's writing assignments, rather they skim peer writing, chunking phrases or sentences to get at meaning--techniques identified by Swaffer (15) as authentic reading strategies. Recognizing the evident linkage between reading and writing skills in the L_2 classroom helps students find strategies to become better writers.

Most L_2 students (with English as their native language) organize their paragraphs around a topic sentence, and attempt to organize a linear

structure paragraph by paragraph within an essay, as they have been conditioned to do in their English classes in U.S. school system. Studies have shown the discourse pattern in English to be different than that of Spanish (Kaplan, 15; Montaño-Harmon, 417). L_2 students tend to carry over the discourse pattern of their native writing into their second-language writing. To summarize the different discoure patterns, English writing tends to be linear in its development, and Spanish writing allows greater freedom to digress from the central idea. In Spanish, structure is either circular or linear. This issue is called contrastive rhetoric, and it complicates the teaching of L_2 writing. As evaluators of writing in a second language, it is important to recognize that there are cultural differences, while grading student writing. Furthermore if assigning an essay, there is a standard academic writing model in U.S. schools--i.e., the five paragraph essay with an introduction containing a thesis statement, three content paragraphs--each possessing a topic sentence--and, of course, a conclusion. This culturally-tied paradigm allows very little "digression". Nevertheless many of our students have had exposure to the Spanish language and culture. To some extent, students may be aware of different rhetorical styles. It is necessary to expose students to authentic writing samples to see these cultural differences as well. Students may not imitate these different discourse patterns, unless asked to do so. From my observations, they do not voluntarily imitate these styles. Allowing students to experience the different writing and rhetorical styles of the target culture through the imitation of a L_2-literary passage (using the cloze method) is a worthwhile writing task. This exercise equips the student to begin to analyze style differences.

How to do peer/instructor commenting in class

With early drafts of a writing assignment (in a university-level beginning, intermediate or advanced class), I prefer in-class peer and instructor feedback because students generally need hands-on help generating and clarifying ideas. It is a rare student that does not require assistance in identifying and focusing the central idea (thesis statement) in their writing. When using the process writing method, it is understood that students must make multiple copies of their writing assignments or they will be penalized. To organize a peer-commenting session (or peer tutorial), place students in groups of three or four and have students exchange papers. Pass out commenting guides, see figures 1 and 2. These commenting guides help students look for specific elements in each paper. They make the daunting task of critiquing a peer's writing more manageable because they look for and comment on particular things. In groups, while each student reads their own writing assignment aloud, their classmates follow along on the copies. Then students address the questions on the commenting guides, and they may make additional comments. Comments are made orally, but students are encouraged also to jot down their comments on the guides and on the actual writing assignments and return them to their classmate's after the session. The purpose of this is two-fold: (1) Written commentary helps students remember the suggestions for revisions. (2) Students save the commenting guides (and copies of their early drafts) and hand them in with their final draft. This gives the instructor an opportunity to assess the level of participation on the guides and the thoroughness of the revisions.

While the students are in these group sessions, I quickly skim the first draft of their writing assignments--generally, looking for only one element. I

Figure 1
Spanish Level: Beginning
Writing Topic: Mi familia (paragraph format)
Draft 1

Guía para la revisión de la redacción

Instrucciones: Use esta guía para revisar el párrafo de su compañero/a en español.

1. Subraye (_____) el punto central.

2. Marque las partes confusas con puntos de interrogación (¿?).

3. Escriba un asterisco (*) al lado del miembro de la familia de que usted quiere saber más.

4. Escriba dos preguntas para su compañero/a sobre su párrafo.

    a.

    b.

5. Vuelva a leer el párrafo. Ponga cualquier verbo dudoso entre corchetes([ ]).

Figure 2
Spanish Level: Intermediate-High/Advanced-Low
Writing Topic: Los «tipos» de estudiantes en nuestra universidad (essay format)
Draft 1

Guía para la revisión de la redacción

Use esta guía para revisar la redacción de su compañero/a en español. Al analizar el ensayo con su grupo, escriba sus comentarios en esta hoja y en la misma redacción. Después grape esta hoja a la redacción de su compañero/a y devuélvala a su compañero/a de clase.

1. Subraye (_____) el punto central (o la tesis). ¿Ha declarado su compañero/a el punto central temprano y claramente?

2. Ponga entre corchetes ([ ]) las partes que no están claras.

3. Mencione tres ideas más para enriquecer la redacción de su compañero/a.

   a.

   b.

   c.

4. ¿Qué parte le parece la más interesante? ¿Y, por qué?

5. Divídase el ensayo entre sus compañeros, vuelva a leer su trozo de la redacción fijándose sólo en la acentuación. Señale los casos dudosos con círculos y devuelva la redacción a su compañero/a para analizarlos.

might look for an adequate thesis statement or check for coherent ideas. Even with short writing assignments, for most student writers, the trickiest part of the first draft is to decide upon their central idea (or thesis statement). This is why I suggest that the instructor read for the thesis statement in the first draft and underline it. Look for the thesis at the end of the writing assignment. Often when students write their first drafts, they write down everything they know about the topic and in the process discover what they want to say about the topic. This is why the thesis appears toward the end of the writing. Next the instructor pulls the student briefly out of the group session and verifies the main idea with the student. This can be done very quickly. Often it leads to revision of the main idea, further focusing this idea or searching for a central idea (among the ideas expressed in the first draft). This type of mini-conference with the instructor is quite successful in the L_2 class in situations where meeting with each individual outside of class is often out of the question.

How to do peer/instructor commenting outside of class

For later drafts of a writing assigment, I propose that students make written comments on each other's writing outside of class. Again, students exchange papers with three or four classmates, but this time they take these papers home with commenting guides. This gives them ample time to read and reread their classmate's writing assignments and to formulate their suggestions on paper for their peers to be given to their classmates to aid in the revision of the assignment, see figures 3 and 4. Students must know they will be held accountable for their participation on the commenting guides to insure the success of the method. Notice that the commenting guides for later drafts pose questions that have less to do with idea generation (as in the early guides) and

Figure 3
Spanish Level: Intermediate-Mid
Writing Topic: Carta para un/a amigo/a mexicano/a sobre la universidad norteamericana, usando ejemplos de experiencias personales pasadas (letter format)
Late Draft

Guía para la revisión de la redacción

Use este guía para revisar la redacción de su compañero/a en español. Escriba sus comentarios en esta hoja y en la misma redacción. Después grape esta hoja al artículo de su compañero/a y devuélvalo a su compañero/a de clase.

1. Liste abajo tres aspectos principales de la vida universitaria que destaca su compañero/a.

a.

b.

c.

2. Describa el tono del autor. ¿Son apropiados el uso de tú y usted y las salutaciones y las despedidas? Si no, escriba unas sugerencias abajo.

3. Busque palabras y frases redundantes. Póngalas entre corchetes ([ ]).

4. Subraye todos los verbos en el pasado: todas las formas del pretérito y del imperfecto de indicativo. Con signos de interrogación (¿?), marque los casos dudosos. Después consulte a su profesor/a de español o su libro de gramática sobre los casos dudosos.

Figure 4
Spanish Level: Advanced
Writing Topic: Artículo de interés humano (journalistic format)
Late Draft

Guía para la revisión de la redacción

Use este guía para revisar la redacción de su compañero/a en español. Escriba sus comentarios en esta hoja y en la misma redacción. Después grape esta hoja al artículo de su compañero/a y devuélvalo a su compañero/a de clase.

La tesis

1. a. Identifique y escriba la tesis abajo.

   b. ¿Es la tesis suficiente enfocada para un artículo de tres páginas? Si no, escriba una alternativa abajo.

El contenido

2. Lea el artículo de interés humano y después analice el título y cópielo abajo. ¿Capta el título al lector? Escriba una alternativa para el título, si es necesario.

3. ¿Son los ejemplos y explicaciones suficientemente detallados? En el margen de la redacción, escriba unas sugerencias para profundizar las descripciones y los ejemplos.

La organización

4. Escriba un número al lado de cada párrafo en el ensayo. Abajo escriba los números, y al lado de los números escriba la idea central de cada párrafo. ¿Tiene cualquier párrafo más que una idea? Indíquelo.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

5. ¿Hay secciones redundantes? Subráyelas.

El estilo

6. Busque palabras redundantes. Póngalas entre corchetes ([ ]).

7. ¿Es la estructura de sus oraciones animada y variada? Escriba de nuevo dos o tres de las frases abajo.

La gramática

8. Vuelva a leer la redacción fijándose en todos los verbos de ser y estar. Señale los casos dudosos con círculos y devuelva la redacción a su compañero/a para consultar a su profesor/a de español o su libro de gramática sobre los usos dudosos.

address specifically organization, style and grammatical concerns which are usually raised later in the writing process.

Feedback on the draft before the final copy is when the instructor should focus on form, style, coherency of ideas and grammar. Regarding grammar, I suggest using a system of abbreviations that point out to the student that the marked elements need to be revised such as the example in Appendix B. Through these abbreviations, the instructor solicits the correction from the student, but does not furnish it. At this point in the writing process, instructor feedback has less to do with content and addresses more directly grammar and syntax. Hopefully the content issues will have been fleshed out in earlier drafts. During the process, the instructor spends a reasonable amount of time marking grammar in this draft. It is at this point that the instructor notices that the content in a writing assignment that has been through several drafts should be of higher quality than a one-shot writing assignment in which the instructor attempts to mark everything from content to grammar at the same time. In this phase, the instructor's role to be the classroom authority regarding Spanish language use is central because students are not consistent when addressing each other's concerns regarding grammar. Students can exchange much misinformation regarding Spanish syntax and spelling.

Conclusion

When surveying my Spanish conversation and composition students about the types of feedback that benefited their writing the most--they, of course, deferred to instructor feedback. I suspect it is because instructor feedback is consistent and students understand the power of the course evaluator. Additionally, they pointed out that peer feedback was very useful in

revising their assignments--as long as their peers made sincere efforts to supply useful feedback. On a practical level the instructor must build the completion of these steps (i.e., commenting guides, tutorials) into the grading system. Unless you have quite self-motivated students, they must understand that they have to participate fully in each stage of the writing process. One student commented that the tutorials and commenting guides were not only a useful exercise in correcting and analyzing writing in Spanish, but that using these methods tested mutual responsibility.

To conclude, the use of student feedback (through guides and tutorials) and instructor feedback (through conferences and written comments) all enhance student writing in a number of ways: by practicing analytical and editing skills, by requiring revisions of student writing and by achieving multi-skill L_2 interaction revolving around the writing task. Above all, student feedback steers them away from the notion that their Spanish writing is just for the teacher and provides an audience for their Spanish writing. After all, writing is a social act, most writing (with the exception of personal diaries or notes that we write to ourselves) in <u>any</u> language will have a reader. By having student readers as well as the instructor respond to writing the importance of the audience will become more apparent to the L_2 student.

Appendix A

In preparation for peer tutorials, I suggest handing out guidelines to the students. The following guidelines prepare students for constructive group interaction. These are adapted from Redacción y revisión: Estrategias para la composición en español (Gerrard, n.p.).

Guidelines for Student Writers

1. Before you meet with your group, jot down some concerns you have about your paper.
2. Give your readers a clean, typed draft. Double space and leave at least a one-inch margin for comments.
3. Even if your group members have read your paper beforehand, read your paper out loud as they follow along on their copies.
4. If your readers are shy about voicing criticism or unsure about where to begin, tell them what you are trying to accomplish and what your difficulties are. Ask for help with a specific problem, e.g., Do I need to spell out exactly what Bolívar's inheritance was? Can you think of anything else I should say about this tutor? How can I make the point in paragraph 2 more clearly?
5. Remember that the point of the discussion is to help you. If your readers adopt an aggressive or judgmental tone, try not to become defensive. Remind them that they're looking at unfinished (not flawed) work, and ask them how they would solve the problem.
6. Take your reader's reactions seriously, but don't feel that you have to follow every suggestion. After all, it's your paper.

Guidelines for Student Commentors

1. Remember that you're a collaborator, not a judge. Rather than evaluate the merits of the draft, think about what the author should do next. What would your next step be if it were your draft.
2. Trust your instincts. If you're confused, say so, even if you don't know exactly what's wrong.
3. Focus your conversation on the paper's ideas, structure, or style rather than on grammar or spelling. Most of the time, it is best to leave discussion of Spanish grammar to your teacher.
4. Ask questions that will improve your understanding of the author's purpose.
5. If you like something about the paper, even if it's a single word, say so. Nothing instructs like praise.
6. Feel free to disagree with the paper's ideas. Your perspective will help your classmate sharpen his or her argument.

Appendix B

Many instructors use systems like the one below to mark errors in student writing This example is taken from Redacción y revisión: Estrategias para la composición en español (Gerrard, n.p.).

Abreviaturas para la redacción de composiciones

a	añadir o eliminar la a personal
ac	(no) debe llevar acento, acento mal puesto
art	artículo equivocado
con	concordancia defectuosa nombre-adjetivo, sujeto-verbo
cont	contracción necesaria
frag	fragmento
ger	gerundio incorrecto
m	poner la letra en minúscula/en mayúscula
m/f	uso incorrecto del género masculino o femenino
neg	expresión negativa incompleta o equivocada
omit	omitir
ort	error de ortografía
p	puntuación incorrecta, mal colocada, falta de puntuación
pal	palabra inapropiada, incorrecta, anglicismo
pl	forma incorrecta del plural
prep	preposición incorrecta o innecesario
pron	pronombre incorrecto, omitido o no necesario
red	palabras o expresiones redundantes
rev	revisar, escribir de nuevo
s/e	uso incorrecto de ser o estar
sint	construcción incorrecta, cambiar el orden de las palabras
tes	tesis no declarada, confusa
trans	transición incorrecta o necesaria
v	forma tiempo/modo verbal incorrecto
var	falta de variedad en la longitud o estructura de la oración
?	significado obscuro, difícil de comprender
^	insertar

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